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by the use of other substantives to indicate the nature of a particular tablet (*kohau o te ranga, kohau o te pure*).

As already mentioned (p. 137), the chants associated with the tablets were recited by learned men or bards called *tangata rongorongo*. Reading of the tablets or chanting from them was taught in special huts, comparable to the schools of learning (*whare wananga*) of the Maori. At Te Hare-titaha in Anakena I was shown stone curbs which were supposed to be remains of the most famous school for *rongorongo* men. There were similar houses in other districts. The atmosphere and the methods in these houses of learning were described by some informants on the authority of old men now dead. Unfortunately these traditions are colored by details of the missionary school system:

> The school houses were open sheds with thatched roofs. In the morning the children waited outside the house until they were told by the teacher to enter. To the teacher's salute of *maira* they answered *kokoea*. Each student knelt before a flat stone (*maea rango*), which served as a writing desk. The assistant instructor (*te pahu*) counted the children to find out whether any were missing. The teacher started the lesson by reciting a prayer from a tablet. Then the children were taught to make string figures, each of which was associated with a chant that they must memorize. There were chants for love, for the dead, for saving people from dying, for addressing noblemen, and for the multiplication of birds and fish.
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> Banana leaves were used as copy books and on them the pupils practiced the engraving of signs with a sharp bone from the frigate bird (*makohe*). Te Haha said the copy books were sheaths from the banana trunk (194, p. 214).
>
> According to Routledge, Te Haha was taught by King Nga-ara, but Charli Teao, the nephew of Te Haha, told me that his uncle had been trained by Taki, another uncle of Charli. Taki had been taught by Ngangiriva. Te Haha described King Nga-ara as "holding a tablet in one hand and swaying from side to side as he recited. Besides giving instruction, he inspected the candidates prepared by other professors, who were generally their own sons; he looked at their *kohau* and made them read, on which he either passed them, clapping if they did well, or turned them back. Their sponsors were made personally responsible. If the pupils acquitted themselves creditably, presents of *kohau* were made to the teachers; if the youth failed, the tablets of the instructor were taken away" (194, p. 245).

Besides the annual gathering and chanting by *rongorongo* men at Orongo during the feast of the bird-man, these learned bards met once a year at Anakena to chant for the king. People came from all over the island to hear them "read" from the tablets. This public "reading" must be considered as a general contest between *rongorongo* men and a test of the ability of each. Visitors arrived with *huhu* (sticks with feathers) to which turmeric was tied, as a courtesy to the king. The food to be consumed during the feast was supplied by the king, who was aided by people of neighboring districts. Te Haha described to Routledge (194, pp. 245-246) one such gathering, which he attended in his youth:

> Both King Nga-ara and his son, Kaimako . . . sat on seats made of tablets, and each had a tablet in his hand; they wore feather hats, as did all the professors. The

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rongorongo men were arranged in rows, with an alley-way down the center to the Ariki. Some of them had brought with them one tablet only; others as many as four. The old ones read in turn, or sometimes two together, from the places where they stood, but their tablets were not inspected. Te Haha and his comrades stood on the outskirts, and he and one other lad held *maru* in their hands. If a young man failed, he was called up and his errors pointed out; but if an old man did not read well, Nga-ara would beckon to Te Haha, who would go up to the man and take him out by the ear. Our informant repeated this part of the story identically months later, and added that the Ariki would say to the culprit, "Are you not ashamed to be taken out by a child?" the offender's hat was taken away, but the tablet was not inspected.

The entire morning was spent in hearing one half of the men read; there was an interval at midday for a meal, after which the remainder recited, the whole performance lasting till evening. Fights occasionally ensued from people scoffing at those who failed. Nga-ara would then call Te Haha's attention to it, and the boy would go up to the offenders with the *maru* in his hand and look at them, when they would stop and there would be no more noise. When the function was over, the Ariki stood on a platform borne by eight men and addressed the *rongorongo* men on their duties, and doing well, and gave them each a chicken. Another old man, Jotefa, gave a different account of the great assembly, by which the Ariki sat on his stoop and the old men stood before him and prayed; according to this version they either did not bring their tablets or their doing so was voluntary. In addition to the great day, there were minor assemblies at new moon, or the last quarter of the moon, when the *rongorongo* men came to Anakena. The Ariki walked up and down reading the tablets, while the old men stood in a body and looked on.

In conformance with his supervisory duties Nga-ara is said to have traveled round the island and to have stayed for some while with the experts in each district. Routledge (194, p. 246) heard of a man of the south coast who was considered to be "too big a man to have a school." He also went about visiting and inspecting schools.

Tradition states that when Nga-ara died his body was carried to the ahu on three tablets, followed by the *rongorongo* men. The tablets were buried with him.

The *tangata rongorongo* of Easter Island are better understood when compared with those of the Marquesas and of Mangareva. In the Marquesas the *tuhuna o'ono* was "master chanter, tribal bard, or ceremonial priest, who presided in all important ritual, and served as repository and teacher of sacred and traditional lore" (104, p. 145). He was also the teacher of sacred chants and director of chanting at family feasts. The word *o'ono* is the equivalent of *rongo* since in the Marquesan dialect the *r* is dropped and the nasal velar (*ng*) becomes *n*. In the Marquesas there were tests of the *tuhuna o'ono* by other members of the same profession and contests between *tuhuna o'ono* of different tribes (104, p. 229). Any *tuhuna* who was judged in error by a majority of the masters gathered was immediately deprived of his title and could never lay claim to it again.

On Mangareva also there was a class of chanters or "intellectuals" who were termed *rongorongo* (*taura rongorongo*). They were not priests, properly speaking, but were responsible for the sacred chants for important